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*Mr. H. H. LEST
Per
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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO THE

Hexham Urban District Council

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1934,

BY

Dr. G. PATTON.



HEXHAM :
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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1934.

To the Chairman and Members of the Hexham Urban District Council :—

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my first Annual Report for the full year ending 31st December, 1934. This report contains the particulars required by the Ministry of Health Circular 1417, dated the 25th October, 1934.

Before proceeding to set out the various tables of Vital Statistics, I wish to give a brief outline of conditions generally in the Urban District. With regard to MUNICIPAL ACTIVITIES and AMENITIES, Hexham is well provided and compares favourably with any town of its size with which I am acquainted. It is picturesque in its situation, has an excellent and abundant water supply, a good sewage system and clean and well-cared for streets and roads. Its parks and open spaces, are for a town of this size extensive and well cared for. There is also a Municipal Bowling Green and Golf Course. There is, however, another side to the picture. Like all towns of an ancient character, it has a great quantity of old and dilapidated property, lacking in the amenities which the trend of modern progress requires; insanitary and badly situated and rightly coming under the category of Slum Areas. In addition, there are many individual houses, which coming under the same category, though not forming Slum Areas, are so dilapidated as to call for demolition, and many more which call for considerable outlay to bring them within measurable distance of the standard called for by the Ministry of Health. In addition, there is much tenementation over shops and business premises, which will have to be dealt with under the 1930 Housing Act. This will fall heavily on a town of this size, but will have to be faced. Overcrowding also exists to a considerable extent.

The year, however, has been one of considerable progress. Of the sixteen Clearance Areas made, one half have been confirmed by the Ministry, and houses have been built to

accommodate the displaced tenants. The second half of our Clearance Areas will be dealt with this year, and also part of the individual houses listed for demolition. The tenemented property over shops and business property, it is hoped, will be dealt with shortly under Partial Closing Orders.

The year under review was chiefly remarkable for an extensive outbreak of SCARLET FEVER in the town. This was common over the whole country. The disease was mainly of a mild character, but in some cases was of a malignant type, three cases terminating fatally. Two cases of Diphtheria also occurred, but these were isolated instances. It was of a very mild type and there were no deaths.

We are still without a joint Isolation Hospital and are only able to treat one type of Infectious disease in Hospital at a time. I am glad to be able to report, however, that progress is now being made towards an up-to-date joint Hospital.

You will note that the Infant Mortality Rate is again very high. There is no doubt that bad Housing Conditions is a decided contributory factor in such a condition of affairs and I have great hope that when this is amended that we may attain a permanently much lower figure.

A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area in Acres	...	...	...	...	...	5,926
Estimate of Resident Population, 1934	...	...	...	...	...	8,890
Number of Inhabited Houses, end of 1934, according to Rate Book	...	...	...	...	...	2,200
Rateable Value and Sum represented by a Penny Rate (£63,545)	...	...	...	...	...	£255

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, including Industries carried on in the area.

No large industries : Nothing affecting the public health.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live-Births.

			Total.	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	114	60	54
Illegitimate	...	...	10	4	6

Still-Births.

			Total.	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	2	—	2
Illegitimate	...	...	—	—	—

Birth-Rate , per 1,000 of the estimated Resident Population	...	...	...	...	...	13.9
Rate per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births	...	...	...	...	...	14.1
Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, Childbirth :						
From Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other causes	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.

Deaths of Infants under ONE YEAR of age, per thousand births :—

Legitimate	...	...	...	...	61.4
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	400.0
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	Nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	Nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	1
Death-Rate , per 1,000 of the estimated population	...	...	...	...	12.5

DEATHS.

During the year there have been 112 deaths of persons in, or belonging to the Hexham Urban District. This is a decrease on last year when there were 128 deaths. These figures give a Death Rate of 12.5 per thousand, compared with 14.4 for the year 1933. The following table classifies these deaths according to their age groups :—

Age Groups.				Locality of Deaths.		
0—1	...	...	11			
1—2	...	...	3			
2—5	...	...	3			
5—15	...	...	3	Gilesgate Ward	...	49
15—25	...	...	4	Leazes Ward	...	22
25—45	...	...	7	& Priestpople Ward	...	24
45—65	...	...	26	Hencotes Ward	...	17
65—75	...	...	22			—
Over 75	...	...	19			112
„ 80	...	...	13			—
„ 90	...	...	1			
Total	...	...	112			

The chief causes of Death are set out in the following Table :—

CAUSES OF DEATH.					M.	F.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	...	...	...	...	—	1
Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	1	2
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
Influenza	...	...	...	...	—	—
Crebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	...	—	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	4	1
Other Tuberculosis diseases	...	...	...	...	1	—
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer, Malignant Disease	...	...	...	...	9	11
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	2
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	...	3	1
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	5	4
Aneurysm	...	...	...	...	1	—
Other Circulatory diseases	...	...	...	...	2	6
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	3	6
Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	—	—
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	1	—
Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	1	—
Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
Cirrhosis of liver	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other diseases of liver, etc.	...	...	...	...	—	1
Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	...	1	1
Acute and chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	...	4	9
Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	—	1
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	—	—
Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, malformations, etc.	...	...	...	...	1	4
Senility	...	...	...	...	5	3
Suicide	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Violence	...	...	...	...	2	1
Other defined diseases	...	...	...	...	2	6
					—	—
					49	63
					—	—

Infant Mortality.

There were 11 deaths of infants under one year of age as compared with 7 in 1933. The Infant Mortality Rate is 88.7 per thousand births compared with 62.5 for 1933.

BIRTH-RATE, DEATH-RATE, AND ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1934.

England and Wales, 121 County Boroughs and Great Towns, and 135 Smaller Towns.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1934, but those for London and the Towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1933.

	Rate per 1,000 total Population		Annual Death-rate per 1,000 Population										Rate per 1,000 Live Births		Percentages of Total Deaths			
	Live Births	Still Births	All Causes	Typhoid & Para-	Small-pox	Measles	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Influenza	Violence	Diarrhoea & Enteritis (under 2 years)	Total Deaths under one year	Certified by Registered Medical Practitioners	Inquest Cases	Certified by Coroner after P.M. No Inquest	Uncertified causes of Death	
				Typhoid fevers														
England and Wales ...	14·8	0·62	11·8	0·00	0·00	0·09	0·02	0·05	0·10	0·14	0·54	5·5	59	90·4	6·5	2·1	1·0	
118 County Boroughs & Great Towns, including London ...	14·7	0·66	11·8	0·00	0·00	0·12	0·02	0·06	0·11	0·12	0·47	7·4	63	90·5	6·1	2·9	0·5	
132 Smaller Towns (estimated Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,030 at Census 1931)	15·0	0·67	11·3	0·00	0·00	0·07	0·02	0·04	0·09	0·14	0·42	3·6	53	91·2	6·1	1·6	1·1	
London ...	13·2	0·50	11·9	0·00	0·00	0·20	0·02	0·07	0·11	0·12	0·56	12·6	67	87·7	6·3	6·0	0·0	
Hexham U.D. ...	13·9	0·22	12·5	0·11	0·00	0·00	0·33	0·00	0·00	0·10	0·33	8·9	88	95·55	·89	·89	2·67	

TUBERCULOSIS.—New cases and Mortality during 1934 :—

Age periods.	New Cases				Nett Deaths in Hexham Urban District			
	Pulmonary		Non Pulm.		Pulmonary		Non Pulm	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
5—15	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
20—25	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
25—35	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
35—45	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
45—55	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55—65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	6	2	2	1	4	1	1	—

	Cases Notified.	Deaths.
Gilesgate Ward ...	6	2
Leazes Ward ...	2	2
Priestpottle Ward ...	3	2
Hencotes Ward ...	—	—
	11	6

The number of deaths from Tuberculosis for the year under review was six, against four last year. I emphasise that our high figures are largely due to the housing conditions. Until these are satisfactorily improved, you cannot expect to have other than a large Tuberculosis Death-Rate. What you have done is already showing results in your General Death-Rate and your Infantile Death-Rate, and to some extent in Tuberculosis, but a steady progression along the lines of the last few years must continue. It is comparatively useless

to send a sufferer to a sanatorium and then bring him back to the insanitary and over-crowded conditions from which he was taken. The patient relapses and is likewise a source of infection to those living with him under such conditions. It has been suggested that a proportion of new houses should be specially allocated to such cases. There is much to be said for this policy, but in a town the size of Hexham there are obvious drawbacks to this scheme. But not adopting it renders it still more important that there should be no cessation or slowing down in your housing scheme.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1934 :—

Disease				Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	1	—	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	56	38	3
Diphtheria	...	...	...	2	1	—
Erysipelas	...	...	...	9	1	—
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	8	2	9
Cerebro-Spinal Men.	...	...	...	1	—	—
Total				77	42	13

38 cases of Scarlet Fever have been admitted to the Isolation Hospital during the year.

GENERAL.

The total of the chief notifiable infectious diseases for the year 1934 shows an increase from the previous year, being 77 against 56.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

The particulars of this disease are asked for in the following form, and are given herewith :—

Table showing cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum in 1934.

	CASES.			Vision unimpaired	Vision impaired	Total Blindness	Deaths
	Notified	Treated					
		At Home	In Hospital				
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	—

A.—Cancer.

There are no special facilities for the treatment of Cancer, other than the advice given by their own Private Practitioner, or being sent to the War Memorial Hospital, Hexham, or the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle, to which Institutions they may be sent, or the Dean Street House (County Hospital).

The following table shews the incidence of Cancer, as a cause of death, with relation to age and sex, and the organs affected :—

					M.	F.
Pancreas	...	...	...	...	—	68
Ovary	...	...	...	...	—	68
„	...	...	...	...	—	57
„	...	...	...	...	—	68
Bladder	...	...	...	...	64	77
Pelvis	...	...	...	...	70	—
Stomach	...	...	...	...	66	—
Ear	...	...	...	...	60	—
Pybus	...	...	...	...	—	73
Breast	...	...	...	...	—	39
Orbit	...	...	...	...	6	—
Rectum	...	...	...	...	54	52
„	...	...	...	...	77	—
Colin	...	...	...	...	65	84
Oesophagus	...	...	...	...	55	70
Liver	...	...	...	...	—	48
					9	11

B.—Prevention of Blindness.

No special treatment, other than the usual Post-Natal treatment.

C.—Tuberculosis.

Cases of Tuberculosis are treated at Wooley Sanatorium and are under the auspices of the N.C.C. A few beds are at their disposal at Dene Street House Hospital when necessary.

11 cases of Tuberculosis have been notified during the year. Of these 8 were Pulmonary and 3 Non-Pulmonary.

6 Deaths from Tuberculosis have occurred. Of these, 5 were male and 1 female. Six deaths gives a Death Rate of .67 per thousand living.

The total number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Books at December 31st, 1934, is as follows :—

MALES.		FEMALES.		Total.
Pul.	Non.Pul.	Pul.	Non.-Pul.	
61	19	66	10	156

It should be noted that part of the reduction in T.B. Statistics given above, is due to an overhaul of our T.B. Register, and removal of entries which cannot now be traced.

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority : Medical, Nursing and Sanitary.

One whole-time Medical Officer, who holds the Diploma of Public Health.

One Sanitary Inspector, who is also Town Surveyor and holds the Diploma, A.M.I.C.E., and R.S.I.

One Health Visitor (S.R.N.), Fever and C.M.B.

2. Legislation in force—no change.

A. Laboratory facilities—Swabs and specimens are dealt with by the County Laboratory.

B. Ambulance—one horse-van for infectious cases of the Urban District Council.

C. Nursing in the homes—A Voluntary Association provides two District Nurses, who also act as Midwives for the district.

D. Clinics and Treatment Centres—None provided by the U.D.C.

E. Hospitals, Public and Voluntary.

- (i.) The Isolation Hospital fulfils the requirements of the district, but co-ordination with the County is contemplated.
- (ii.) The War Memorial Hospital—This is supported by voluntary subscriptions. Any patient who pays a fee is received from the Urban District.
- (iii.) Dean Street House—Patients are received from the Urban Area. There is accommodation for Maternity cases. Others go to Corbridge Hospital, which is about two miles away and belongs to the County.

3. Medical Officers of Health, Maternity and Child Welfare. One Medical Officer.

- (i.) Midwifery and Maternity Services—No change.
Two District Nurses.
- (ii.) Institutional Provision for Mothers and Children—
For mothers—None by the Urban District Council, other than the County Hospital Dene Street House; for children—the Children's Nursery, Hextol Terrace, where they have 35 to 36 cots for permanent children.
- (iii.) One Health Visitor, who acts as Infant Protection Visitor under Part i. of the Act.

OTHER STATISTICS for the year 1934.

Midwives practising in the district	2
(Trained, 2 ; Untrained, Nil)	
Number of cases attended by same in 1934 ...	82
Midwifery	64
Number of cases in which Medical Aid was summoned	20
Number of Maternal Deaths notified in accordance with Rule E. 21/1/3 of the Central Midwives' Board	1
Visits paid by Health Visitor during the year...	3712
Visits to Expectant Mothers	15
Visits paid to Infants under one year, total ...	1495
Visits paid to Infants, 1-5 years, total	2148

SURVEYOR AND SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1934.

GENTLEMEN,

During the year, the re-surfacing and repairs to many roads in the area were carried out, and the work on the improvement of the Mart Roads was almost completed.

During the year, 1524 visits have been made to various premises in the district, the outcome of which was the finding of 237 nuisances, all of which were remedied, or have since received attention.

Sixty-six new houses have been erected during the year by private enterprise.

Water Supply.—The water supply was well maintained during the year, there being an ample supply of pure spring water to the whole of the town.

Sewage Disposal.—The system of sewage and drainage has been well maintained.

Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops.—I give below the number of premises registered under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926 :—

Farms	...	...	...	...	...	28
Retail Purveyors of Milk...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Wholesale Traders and Producers of Milk						18

Slaughter Houses.—The Public Slaughter-houses are in good condition, and the killing and preparing is carried out under proper humane and hygienic conditions.

Workshops.—There are 72 Workshops on the register and they generally have been found in a satisfactory condition.

Bakehouses.—Eleven are registered and the condition of these houses is, generally, good.

House Refuse.—The house refuse has been collected daily by the Council's employees, and as the area of collection is increasing, the Council are considering this question very carefully both as to the number of collections which should be made, and for making of improvements in its disposal.

Pleasure Grounds.—Pleasure Grounds have received considerable attention and small improvements have been carried out.

Infectious Diseases and Disinfection.—All premises in which cases of Infectious Disease occurred have been disinfected.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

W. G. LANDALE, A.M.Inst. C.E.,
Surveyor & Sanitary Inspector.

HOUSES ERECTED during the Year 1934—Hexham Urban District.

HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR.

	With State Assistance.	Unaided	TOTAL.
(a) By Local Authority ...	—	—	—
(b) By other Bodies or Persons ...	—	66	66

1.—Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the Year :

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	613
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	740
(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ...	132
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	132
(3) Number of dwellinghouses found to be in a state so dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation... ..	3
(4) Number of dwellinghouses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	12

2.—Remedy of Defects without Service of Fomal Notices :

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its officers	3
--	---

3.—Action under Statutory Powers :

(A) <i>Proceedings under Sections 17, 18, and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930 :</i>	
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which “notices” were served requiring repairs	—
(2) No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—	
(a) By owners	—
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	—
(B) <i>Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—</i>	
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	3
(2) No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a) By owners	—
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	—
(C) <i>Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of Housing Act, 1930 :—</i>	
(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	—
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	—
(D) <i>Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930 :</i>	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	—
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	—

No. of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in C (2) or (5) above	—
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W. G. LANDALE, Inspector.

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED, 1934

	Hexham Urban District. Inspector—W. G. LANDALE.	After Letter or Interview	After Informal Notice	After Statutory Notice	Total
Sanitary Conveniences	Privies abolished ... ..	...	...	...	...
	„ repaired ... ..	...	...	...	...
	Privy ashpits abolished ...	...	...	...	...
	„ „ roofed or repaired	1	...	...	1
	Pail-closets abolished ...	...	...	...	...
	Water closets provided ...	9	3	2	14
	„ „ repaired ...	18	11	...	29
	Sanitary bins provided ...	1	...	...	1
„ „ renewed ...	22	...	...	22	
Drainage	New drains constructed ...	...	...	...	...
	Drains repaired or reconstructed	4	5	...	9
	Additional gullies provided ...	...	...	...	36
	Old gullies replaced... ..	...	...	...	7
	Scullery sinks provided ...	2	...	...	2
	„ waste pipes repaired ...	9	8	...	17
	„ „ trapped ...	1	7	...	8
	Yards repaired or reconstructed	2	1	...	3
Water supply	Sources closed or discontinued, —	No. of houses affected, —			
	New service provided ... 5	No. of houses „ 5			
RIVERS POLLUTION :—					
Cases detected —		Particulars —			
Remedied ... —		do.			
S.D. Works provided —		do.			

FOOD INSPECTION, 1934.

UNSOUND FOOD.		Surrendered	Seized	Legal Pro- ceedings
Beef (home-killed)	stones...	67	...	...
„ (Imported)	„ ...	...	...	...
Mutton (home-killed)	„ ...	...	...	...
„ (Imported)	„ ...	...	...	...
Pork	... „ ...	...	...	...
Bacon	... lbs....	...	...	...
Fruit...	... lbs....	...	...	...
Other Foods :	... ..	...	...	...

URBAN DISTRICT OF HEXHAM. 1934.

Inspection of Factories, Workshops & Workplaces,Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or
Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices. (3)	Occupiers Prosecuted. (4)
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	16	...	...
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	25	4	...
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' premises)	7	1	...
Total	48	5	...

2.—DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Particulars. (1)	No. of Defects.			Number of Prosecutions (5)
	Found. (2)	Remedied. (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector. (4)	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts :</i>				
Want of cleanliness	2	2	...	...
Want of ventilation ... ..	...	...	...	...
Overcrowding ... ..	...	...	...	...
Want of drainage of floors ... ..	...	...	...	...
Other Nuisances	2	2	...	...
Sanitary accom- insufficient ... ..	...	...	...	...
modation unsuitable, defective	1	1	...	...
not separate for sexes	...	...	...	...
<i>Offences under the Factory and Workshop Acts :</i>				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse (s. 101) ... ..	...	...	...	...
Other Offences ... ..	...	...	...	...
(Excluding offences relating to out- work and offences under the Sec- tions mentioned in the Schedule of the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921).				
Total	5	5	...	...



